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PRECAUTIONS AGAINST CHOLERA.

On account of the existing prevalence of cholera in many localities in Asia, steerage passengers from all ports of China and Japan are being examined upon arrival at United States ports by officers of the Public Health Service for the detection of possible cholera carriers. This is done pursuant to the amendment of the quarantine regulations promulgated July 19, 1911, reading as follows:

All steerage passengers arriving at ports in the United States from ports or places infected with cholera shall be subjected to bacteriological examination and shall not be admitted to entry until it has been determined by said examination that they are not cholera bacillus carriers.

PLAGUE, A DISEASE OF RODENTS.

How plague may be present in rats without making its appearance in man is well illustrated by the experience of the steamship *City of Durham*. The history of this vessel emphasizes what students of the subject know must be true, namely, that throughout the world there are many ports infected with plague in which the presence of the disease is not known because human cases have either not developed at all or not in sufficient numbers to attract attention. Such ports in turn undoubtedly serve as foci from which the infection is carried by rats to ships and thus to other ports.

The steamship *City of Durham* arrived at Hongkong August 23, 1916, without cargo, from Shanghai, China, and proceeded at once alongside of a concrete rat-proof wharf. Immediately upon arrival the ship was fumigated with 4 per cent sulphur dioxide. After the fumigation six dead rats were found. Examination of these rats showed that two of them were plague infected. The crew of 66 men were immediately examined and none found sick. The captain stated that no case of human plague had ever occurred aboard his ship.

This steamship is engaged in a general freight trade between New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and ports in the Far East, including Calcutta, Bombay, Rangoon, Vladivostok, Japan ports, Shanghai,

Hongkong, and others. On her last voyage the ship left New York June 17, 1916, calling at Colon, Canal Zone; San Francisco, Muroran, Vladivostok, Shanghai, and Hongkong in the order named. The master of the ship stated that while en route between Colon and San Francisco a member of the crew died of "internal trouble" June 29 and was buried at sea. On previous voyages the ship had been alongside the wharves at Calcutta and Rangoon, but whenever tied to a wharf standard rat guards had always been used on all lines. It was further stated that rats had very seldom been seen on the ship and the master had never heard of sick or dead rats being found on the vessel.

POLIOMYELITIS (INFANTILE PARALYSIS).

THE STATUS OF THE DISEASE IN NEW YORK CITY AND SURROUNDING TERRITORY.

By C. H. LAVINDER, Surgeon, United States Public Health Service.

The following brief notes are in continuation of previous reports. The statements made, however, are all provisional. Until the epidemic terminates, it will be impossible to make final statements or to form definite conclusions. It may be added that ultimately the statistical data supplied herewith and in previous reports, will doubtless need some small corrections.

In my last report (dated Aug. 26, 1916) I stated that a study of the weekly report of the cases in Greater New York seemed to indicate definitely that the epidemic was declining. This has proven true, as reference to Table 1 will show. This table gives the figures up to and including September 30, 1916, and it will be noticed that the total weekly reports have now dropped to less than 200 cases, as against a total of 1,210 cases for the week ended August 12, when the epidemic reached its crest in New York City. The figures continue to show a steady decline, and at the present rate of decrease, it would seem likely that by or before the middle of November, poliomyelitis in New York City will have reached about its normal endemic prevalence.

If the figures for the various boroughs are examined by weeks, it will be noticed also that each of these has shown a steady decline. The epidemic, however, did not begin in the various boroughs simultaneously and its march in them has not been entirely uniform. The borough of Richmond, which is the smallest, began early, and the epidemic in that borough seems to have definitely terminated some time ago. This borough up to quite recently showed the highest incidence rate in Greater New York. Quite recently, however, the borough of Queens, where the epidemic, though declining, still exists, has surpassed the borough of Richmond in incidence rate. The highest incidence rate in any of the boroughs has been between